

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly rewrite Claims 1-36 as follows, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121:

1. (Currently amended) A method for producing immortalised antibody-secreting cells, comprising:

(a) providing a transgenic ~~animal~~mouse having antibody-secreting cells capable of expressing one or more transgenes, wherein the antibody-secreting cells are in a non-immortalised state in the absence of a stimulus and are capable of changing to an immortalised state by means of the transgene or transgenes upon exposure of the cells to the stimulus;

(b) extracting the antibody-secreting cells from the ~~animal~~mouse; and

(c) exposing the antibody-secreting cells to the stimulus, thereby immortalising the antibody-secreting cells by means of the transgene or transgenes.

2. (Original) A method for producing antibodies, comprising producing immortalised antibody-secreting cells by a method as defined in claim 1, and collecting antibodies from the cells,

3. (Currently amended) A method for preparing a clonal population of immortalised cells which produce a monoclonal antibody, comprising:

(a) providing a transgenic ~~animal~~mouse having antibody-secreting cells capable of expressing one or more transgenes, wherein the antibody-secreting cells are in a non-immortalised state in the absence of a stimulus and are capable of changing to an immortalised state by means of the transgene or transgenes upon exposure of the cells to the stimulus;

(b) extracting the antibody-secreting cells from the ~~animal~~mouse;

(c) exposing the antibody-secreting cells to the stimulus, thereby immortalising the antibody-secreting cells by means of the transgene or transgenes;

(d) selecting an immortalised antibody-secreting cell which produces the antibody, and

(e) preparing the clonal population of immortalised cells from the immortalised antibody-secreting cell.

4. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein expression of a transgene in the antibody-secreting cells is under the control of an inducible promoter, and the stimulus is capable of regulating activity of the promoter and transgene expression.

5. (Original) A method according to claim 4, wherein the stimulus promotes promoter activity and transgene expression.

6. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 4, wherein the stimulus inhibits promoter activity and transgene expression.

7. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein a product of a transgene in the antibody-secreting cells promotes immortalisation in the presence of the stimulus, and does not promote immortalisation in the absence of the stimulus.

8. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the transgene is an oncogene.

9. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 8, wherein the oncogene is a gene for the large T antigen.

10. (Withdrawn; currently amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the transgenic ~~animal-mouse~~ is an immortomouse.

11. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 1, wherein a product of a transgene in the antibody-secreting cells inhibits immortalisation in the absence of the stimulus, and does not inhibit immortalisation in the presence of the stimulus.

12. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 11, wherein the transgene is a tumour suppressor gene.

13. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 1, wherein a product of a transgene in the antibody-secreting cells inhibits a tumour suppressor function in the cells.

14. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 13, wherein the transgene is mdm2.

15. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 13, wherein the transgene comprises cre recombinase, the tumour suppressor function results from a tumour suppressor gene, and the tumour suppressor gene, or a functional part thereof, is flanked with loxp sites.

16. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 13, wherein a product of the transgene comprises an antisense RNA or ribozyme RNA which is capable of inhibiting expression of a tumour suppressor gene.

17. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 12, wherein the tumour suppressor gene comprises p53.

18. (Original) A method according to claim 8, wherein the oncogene comprises myc, abl, bcl-2, v-rel, ras, papillomavirus E6 protein, papillomavirus E7 protein, adenovirus E1A, PIM1, RhoH/TTF or PAX5.

19. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the transgenic ~~animal mouse~~ comprises antibody-secreting cells in which a tumour suppressor gene has been deleted.

20. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the method comprises the further step of immunising the transgenic ~~animal mouse~~ with an antigen before step (b).

21. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~claim 3~~claim 20, further comprising ~~wherein step (d) comprises selecting an antibody-secreting cell which produces an antibody which recognises the antigen.~~

22. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 3, wherein step (d) comprises fluorescence activated cell sorting.

23. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the transgenic ~~animal mouse~~ is not immunised.

24. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 1, wherein the stimulus comprises a temperature change.

25. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the stimulus comprises a chemical stimulus.

26. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the antibody-secreting cells comprise B lymphocytes.

27. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the antibody is a humanised antibody.

28. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 1, comprising a further step of storing the antibody-secreting cells at a temperature of 0°C or below, after extracting the antibody-secreting cells from the ~~animal~~mouse, and before or after exposing the antibody-secreting cells to the stimulus.

29. (Previously presented) A method for producing a monoclonal antibody, comprising producing a population of immortalised cells by a method as defined in claim 3, and producing the monoclonal antibody from the population of immortalised cells.

30. (Withdrawn) A clonal population of immortalised antibody-secreting cells obtained by a method as defined in claim 3.

31. (Withdrawn) A monoclonal antibody obtained by a method as defined in claim 29.

32. (Withdrawn; Currently amended) An isolated, immortalised antibody-secreting cell derived from a transgenic ~~animal~~mouse, wherein the cell expresses one or more transgenes, the cell is capable of being maintained in an immortalised state by means of the transgene or transgenes in the presence of a stimulus, and the cell is capable of changing to a non-immortalised state in the absence of the stimulus.

33. (Withdrawn) An isolated clonal population of immortalised antibody-secreting cells which produce a monoclonal antibody, comprising a population of immortalised antibody-secreting cells as defined in claim 32.

34-35. (Canceled).

36. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 13, wherein the tumor suppressor function comprises p53.